



Joint Committee on Election Laws

2007-2008

Biennial Report

Rep. Garrett J. Bradley
House Chairman

Sen. Edward M. Augustus, Jr.
Senate Chairman

Joint Committee on Election Laws
2007-2008 Membership

HOUSE

Chairman Garrett J. Bradley of Hingham

Vice-Chair Demetrius J. Atsalis of Barnstable

Paul C. Casey of Winchester

William C. Galvin of Canton

John F. Quinn of Dartmouth

Paul Kujawski of Webster

James B. Eldridge of Acton

Joseph R. Driscoll of Braintree

Willie Mae Allen of Boston

Paul Frost of Auburn

Mary Rogeness of Longmeadow

SENATE

Chairman Edward M. Augustus, Jr. of Worcester

Vice-Chair Karen E. Spilka of Ashland

Anthony W. Petruccelli of Boston*

Michael W. Morrissey of Quincy

Robert S. Creedon, Jr. of Brockton

Scott P. Brown of Wrentham

* Senator Steven A. Baddour also served on the committee for a portion of the 2007-2008 session.

It shall be the duty of the committee on Election Laws to consider all matters concerning elections, election laws and such other matters as may be referred.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
JOINT COMMITTEE ON ELECTION LAWS
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133

To Our Colleagues and Citizens of Massachusetts:

During the 2007-2008 Legislative Session, the Joint Committee on Election Laws was responsible for reviewing 176 pieces of legislation that were referred to its jurisdiction, of which 5 were discharged to other committees. Two bills (H.705 and H.5083) were not reported. Of the remaining 169 bills that were acted upon, 67 were reported out favorably, 8 were reported unfavorably, and 94 were placed into a study order.

In addition, of the 176 total bills, 43 home-rule petitions were considered and reported by the committee, however no action was taken on one home-rule petition (S.459) which lacked a valid local approval. A total of 33 bills processed by the committee were eventually enacted and signed into law.

Fifteen public hearings were conducted by the Committee between April 11, 2007 and September 23, 2008. The committee received testimony on nine proposed Constitutional Amendments and two related bills, reporting all such matters before the Joint Rule 23 deadline of April 25, 2007.

A redrafted Senate bill establishing Election Day voter registration (S.2807) was reported favorably out of committee in a redrafted form on February 21, 2008 and engrossed by the Senate on July 29, 2008.

All but one bill was reported before the Joint Rule 10 deadline of March 19, 2008. An extension of the deadline to report H.705 (campaign finance) was filed, however no further action was taken on the bill.

On October 5, 2007 the committee reported out favorably H.678, a bill proposing that Massachusetts join an interstate compact for choosing electors for President by national popular vote. The Senate engrossed and the House enacted a redrafted version of the bill, H.4952 on July 31, 2008.

On November 14, 2007 the committee reported out favorably S.2414, which changed the date of the Presidential Primary Election from March 4, 2008 to February 5, 2008. The bill was enacted and signed into law on November 26, 2007 as Chapter 179 of the Acts of 2007. The resulting primary election garnered a 43 percent voter turnout among eligible voters, a significant increase over the 2004 primary. Another law, Chapter 369 of the Acts of 2008, allowed voters who had moved more than 6 months but not more than 18 months prior to the November 4, 2008 election, to vote for statewide offices and ballot questions, as well as President and Vice-President of the United States.

It has been an honor and a privilege to lead the committee during the previous session, working with the public, our colleagues, the Secretary of State, the Attorney General's Office, Office of Campaign and Political Finance, and numerous non-partisan outside organizations. The mission of the committee continues to involve reviewing legislation and enacting laws designed to encourage public participation in the democratic process, protect and enhance voters' rights, improve existing voting methods and procedures, and ensure that the election process is open, transparent and accountable to the People.

Rep. Garrett J. Bradley
House Chairman

Sen. Edward M. Augustus, Jr.
Senate Chairman

List of Matters Referred to the Committee During the 2007-2008 Legislative Session

BILL #	SPONSOR	TITLE or DESCRIPTION	HEARING DATE	REPORT
H 39	William Lantigua	An Act relative to the date for state primaries	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
H 148	Bruce Ayers	An Act ... polling places accessible to elderly & physically challenged	06/13/07	OTP 2/6/08
H 626	Cory Atkins	An Act relative to software used in voting machines for elections.	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
H 627	Cory Atkins	An Act relative to age requirements in local elections.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 628	Cory Atkins	An Act relative to residency requirements in local elections.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 629	Bruce J. Ayers	An Act establishing an emergency equipment grant program for firefighters.	n/a	Discharged to Public Safety
H 630	Bruce J. Ayers	An Act establishing a revolving fund to supplement the funding of waterway projects and coastal protection initiatives.	n/a	Discharged to Environment
H 631	Bruce J. Ayers	An Act allowing cities and towns the authority to issue temporary parking identification placards to the temporarily disabled.	n/a	Discharged to Transportation
H 632	John J. Binienda	An Act prohibiting certain election practices.	10/10/07	OTP 2/6/08
H 633	Antonio F. D. Cabral	An Act Reforming the Selection of Presidential Electors.	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
H 634	Antonio F. D. Cabral	An Act relative to the annual street list.	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
H 635	Paul C. Casey	An Act relative to the enrollment of voters in the Commonwealth.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 636	Cheryl Coakley-Rivera	An Act relative to initiative and referendum petitions in cities.	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
H 637	Michael A. Costello	An Act relative to using electronic devices to tabulate election results.	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
H 638	Viriato M. deMacedo	An Act establishing voter identification procedures.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 639	James B. Eldridge	An Act relative to voting equipment.	09/19/07	OTP 2/6/08
H 640	James B. Eldridge	An Act relative to election officers.	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
H 641	James B. Eldridge	An Act prohibiting campaign signs on public property.	10/10/07	OTP 2/6/08
H 642	James H. Fagan	An Act relative to establishing an electronic system for the submission, retrieval, storage, and public disclosure of campaign finance reports.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 643	James H. Fagan	An Act relative to the collection of signatures for initiative and referendum petitions.	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
H 644	James H. Fagan	An Act relative to prohibiting the collection of signatures for initiative or referendum petitions for compensation.	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
H 645	Michael E. Festa	An Act permitting certain questions on presidential primary ballots.	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
H 646	Gloria L. Fox	An Act relative to election day registration.	05/30/07	OTP 2/21/08
H 647	Gloria L. Fox	An Act to establish a statewide voter registration database, voter education and expand authority of the local election districts review commission.	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
H 648	Paul K. Frost	An Act relative to verification of citizenship when registering to vote.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 649	Paul K. Frost	An Act relative to showing identification when voting.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 650	Colleen M. Garry	An Act ensuring election integrity through voter identification.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 651	Colleen M. Garry	An Act regulating conduct at polling places.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 652	Geoffrey D. Hall	An Act requiring the presentation of Identification for voting.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 653	Bradford Hill	An Act relative to voter identification.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 654	Frank M. Hynes	An Act relative to polling places used for the general election.	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
H 655	Bradley H. Jones, Jr.	An Act relative to the community preservation act.	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
H 656	Bradley H. Jones, Jr.	An Act relative to campaign finance reports.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 657	Bradley H. Jones, Jr.	An Act eliminating political action committee contributions.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 658	Bradley H. Jones, Jr.	An Act relative to filling vacancies in the office of senator or representative in congress.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08

BILL #	SPONSOR	TITLE or DESCRIPTION	HEARING DATE	REPORT
H 659	Bradley H. Jones, Jr.	An Act relative to voting procedures for presidential electors.	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
H 660	Bradley H. Jones, Jr.	An Act relative to electioneering communications and independent expenditures.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
H 661	Bradley H. Jones, Jr.	Proposal for a legislative amendment to the Constitution establishing an independent redistricting commission and criteria for redistricting for state house of representatives, senate, and councilor districts.	04/11/07	ONTP 4/25/07
H 662	Bradley H. Jones, Jr.	An Act establishing an independent redistricting commission and criteria for redistricting for congressional districts.	04/11/07	ONTP 4/25/07
H 663	Rachel Kaprielian	An Act providing Braille ballots for blind voters.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 664	Jay R. Kaufman	Proposal for a legislative amendment to the constitution relative to a vacancy in the office of Governor or Lieutenant Governor.	04/11/07	OTP 4/25/07
H 665	Jay R. Kaufman	An Act relative to voting by the instant runoff voting method.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
H 666	Jay R. Kaufman	An Act relative to voting by the instant runoff voting method in primaries.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
H 667	Jay R. Kaufman	An Act to establish a commission to encourage candidate debate and informed voting.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 668	Jay R. Kaufman	An Act to enhance participatory democracy.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 669	Jay R. Kaufman	An Act to provide for comprehensive voter information pamphlets.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 670	Jay R. Kaufman	An Act to ensure secure voting equipment.	10/22/07	OTP 3/19/08
H 671	Jay R. Kaufman	An Act to provide for audits of election results.	10/22/07	OTP 3/3/08
H 672	Kay Khan	An Act relative to candidate nomination papers.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 673	Robert M. Koczera	An Act relative to the joint election of the governor and lieutenant governor.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
H 674	Robert M. Koczera	An Act to implement a voting by mail demonstration project.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 675	Peter J. Koutoujian	An Act relative to early elections.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 676	Peter J. Koutoujian	An Act to secure the right of blind and visually impaired people to vote under the same conditions of privacy and independence as sighted people.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 677	John A. Lepper	An Act relative to vacancies in U.S. Senate.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
H 678	Charles A. Murphy	An Act relative to the agreement among states to elect the President by national popular vote.	9/19/07; 10/5 poll	OTP 10/5/07
H 679	David M. Nangle	An Act mandating public notice of death.	n/a	Discharged to Public Health
H 680	Alice Hanlon Peisch	An Act establishing identification requirements for voters who registered by mail.	06/13/07	OTP 2/6/08
H 681	Alice Hanlon Peisch	An Act relative to absentee ballots.	06/13/07	OTP 3/19/08
H 682	Alice Hanlon Peisch	An Act relative to independent voters.	10/22/07	OTP 3/19/08
H 683	Jeffrey Davis Perry	An Act relative to political committees.	10/22/07	OTP 2/6/08
H 684	Douglas W. Petersen	An Act to establish public financing of statewide and legislative offices.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 685	George N. Peterson	Proposal for a legislative amendment to the Constitution to change the length of term for Representatives and Senators from two years to four years.	04/11/07	ONTP 4/25/07
H 686	Anthony Petrucci	An Act relative to voter registration for program participants.	06/13/07	OTP 2/6/08
H 687	Anthony Petrucci	An Act relative to absentee voting.	06/13/07	OTP 3/19/08
H 688	Anthony Petrucci	An Act relative to specially qualified voters.	6/13/07	OTP 2/6/08; Substitute H.5121
H 689	Anthony Petrucci	An Act relative to electioneering communication and independent expenditures.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
H 690	Anthony Petrucci	An Act relative to reprecincting.	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
H 691	Anthony Petrucci	An Act facilitating absentee voting in the Commonwealth.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 692	Karyn E. Polito	An Act relative to proof of identification for voters.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 693	John F. Quinn	An Act requiring certain mayoral candidates to file as a depository with the Office of Campaign and Political Finance.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08

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H 694	Michael F. Rush	An Act Relative To Certain Campaign Finance Reports.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 695	Michael F. Rush	An Act Requiring Voters To Furnish Identification.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 696	Byron Rushing	An Act enabling cities and towns to extend voting rights in municipal elections to certain noncitizens of the Commonwealth.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 697	Tom Sannicandro	An Act Authorizing reimbursement grants for bulletproof vests for certain police officers.		Discharged to Public Safety
H 698	Tom Sannicandro	An Act relative to election to the General Court.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 699	Angelo M. Scaccia	An Act relative to certain expenditures by some non profit corporations on ballot questions.	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
H 700	Theodore C. Speliotis	An Act relative to ballot questions.	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 701	Theodore C. Speliotis	An Act relative to the delivery of absentee ballots. .	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
H 702	Ellen Story	An Act relative to voting by the Instant Runoff Voting method.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
H 703	Ellen Story	An Act relative to voting by the Instant Runoff Voting method in primary elections.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
H 704	William M. Straus	An Act relative to County Elections for certain vacancies.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
H 705	William M. Straus	An Act to further regulate contributions and disclosure under campaign finance laws.	07/18/07	No further action
H 706	Cleon H. Turner	An Act further regulating elections to provide for a voter consent 'None of the Above' option	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
H 707	Anthony J. Verga	An Act to establish an online voting task force.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 708	Martin J. Walsh	An Act relative to absentee ballots .	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 709	Martin J. Walsh	An Act providing further information when voting.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 710	Martin J. Walsh	An Act relative to the agreement among the states to elect the president by national popular vote .	09/19/07	OTP (H.678)
H 711	Steven M. Walsh	An Act to establish early voting.	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
H 712	Alice K. Wolf	An Act further regulating initiative and referendum petitions.	09/19/07	OTP 2/6; Rule 42A OTP 3/19/08
H 713	Alice K. Wolf	An Act relative to instant runoff voting in congressional elections.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
H2028	Gov / Daniel Bosley	An Act validating ... a special town election in the Town of Hawley	02/06/08	Study 3/19/08
H2230	John Quinn	An Act to study the safety of political sign holders on public roadways	02/06/08	Study 03/19/08
H3747	Gov / Susan Gifford	Validating actions taken at a certain election in Wareham	POLL	OTP 2/26/07
H3777	Robert M. Koczera	Congressional district apportionment of Presidential electors	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
H3945	Thomas P. Conroy	Local voting rights for permanent resident aliens in Wayland	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
H3946	Charles A. Murphy	Relative to multiple office holding in the town of Burlington	9/19/07; POLL	OTP 9/21/07
H3947	Harriett L. Stanley	Relative to (recall) elections in the town of Merrimac	05/30/07	OTP 5/30/07
H3948	Alice K. Wolf	Enabling 17-yr-old residents of Cambridge to vote in local elections	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
H3963	Mary S. Rogeness	Election of city councilors and school committee in Springfield <i>see H.4071</i>	02/06/08	Study 3/19/08
H3971	Gov / Paul Kujawski	Validating actions taken at town election held in the town of Dudley	04/11/07	OTP 4/11/07
H3973	Jay R. Kaufman	Relative to certain preliminary elections in the city of Woburn	04/26/07	OTP 4/26/07
H3992	Kay Khan	An Act Relative to voting in the city of Newton / non-citizens	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
H4013	Denis E. Guyer	An Act providing for recall elections in the town of Colrain	10/22/07	OTP 10/22/07
H4040	Brian Dempsey	An Act relative to the use of voting machines in the city of Haverhill	05/30/07	OTP 5/30/07
H4042	Thomas P. Conroy	Authorizing the Town of Sudbury to extend date for holding election	06/13/07	OTP 6/13/07
H4071	Benjamin Swan	Election of city councilors, school committee persons in Springfield	07/18/07	OTP 7/18/07
H4097	Stephen Stat Smith	Relative to elections in the City of Everett	10/22/07	OTP 10/22/07
H4149	Gov / Peter Kocot	Validating actions taken at town election held in Southampton	08/15/07	OTP 8/15/07
H4250	Gov / Denis Guyer	Validating actions taken at town election held in Lanesborough	10/10/07	OTP 10/20/07

BILL #	SPONSOR	TITLE or DESCRIPTION	HEARING DATE	REPORT
H4260	Jay R. Kaufman	Referendum provisions in the Town of Lexington	10/22/07	OTP 10/22/07
H4397	Ruth B. Balser	Preliminary elections in the City of Newton	02/06/08	OTP 2/6/08
H4414	Christopher Fallon	Malden city councilor assume office upon certification of votes	POLL	OTP 12/19/07
H4458	Joseph Driscoll	Relative to elections in the Town of Braintree	02/06/08	OTP 2/6/08
H4459	Joseph Driscoll	Filling certain vacancies in the Town of Braintree	02/06/08	OTP 2/6/08
H4489	Joseph Driscoll	Vacancies in certain elected offices in the Town of Braintree	02/06/08	OTP 2/6/08
H4500	Todd Smola	Placing questions on Presidential ballot in the Town of Palmer	02/06/08	OTP 2/6/08
H4545	Gov / James Vallee	Validating town election in Medway	POLL	OTP 6/4/08
H4546	Demetrius Atsalis	An Act Relative to Voting by Sex Offenders	03/19/08	OTP 3/19/08
H4560	Gov / Garrett Bradley	An Act Establishing a Voting Precinct in the Town of Hingham	POLL	OTP 3/5/08
H4673	Gov / Wm S Pignatelli	Validating Election in Great Barrington	POLL	OTP 4/17/08
H4704	David Torrisi	Voter identification for voting in Lawrence	05/21/08	Study 5/27/08
H4737	Bradley H. Jones, Jr.	Place seating capacity / alcohol license ques on ballot -Reading	05/21/08	OTP 5/21/08
H4757	William Brownsberger	Place VFW club alcohol license question on ballot in Belmont	POLL	OTP 6/4/08
H4865	William S. Pignatelli	Place question on state ballots / Southern Berkshire Regional School District	06/26/08	OTP 6/26/08
H4884	Gov / Ted Speliotis	Place Selectman office on Nov. ballot in Topsfield	POLL	OTP 7/9/08
H4889	Michael Rush	Nomination signature requirements in city of Boston	07/24/08	Study 7/24/08
H4932	Gov., Rep. Turkington	Validate special election held in Oak Bluffs	POLL	OTP 7/9/08
H4983	Jeffrey Sanchez	Designation of polling places within the city of Boston	07/24/08	OTP 7/24/08
H5083	Michael Rush	Preparation of certain ballots in city of Boston (transliteration)	09/23/08	No further action
H5134	Stephen Kulik	# of nomination signatures for Franklin Council of Governments	POLL	OTP 11/3/08
H5152	Gov / Denis Guyer	Validating actions taken at town elections in the town of Dalton	POLL	OTP 12/3/08
S 21	Richard T. Moore	Proposal for amendment - term of office from 2 to 4 years	04/11/07	ONTP 4/25/07
S 22	Richard T. Moore	Proposal for amendment - independent redistricting commission	04/11/07	ONTP 4/25/07
S 23	Richard T. Moore	Proposal for amendment - emergency appointments of officials	04/11/07	OTP 4/25/07
S 24	Stanley C. Rosenberg	Proposal for amendment - representative character ballot ques	04/11/07	ONTP 4/25/07
S 25	Richard R. Tisei	Proposal for amendment - vacancies in Constitutional offices	04/11/07	ONTP 4/25/07
S 435	Edward M. Augustus	permitting federal candidates to help defray cost of party events	07/18/07	OTP 2/6/08
S 436	Edward M. Augustus	providing further public information - initiative/referendum ques	09/19/07	OTP 3/19/08
S 437	Edward M. Augustus	permitting the counting of votes for replacement party nominees	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
S 438	Steven A. Baddour	administration of PACs organized by non-profits, trade unions, etc.	07/18/07	OTP 3/3/08
S 439	Jarrett T. Barrios	changing the date of the biennial state primaries	10/22/07	See S.2414
S 440	Scott P. Brown	requiring photo identification to receive a ballot	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
S 441	Scott P. Brown	relative to campaign finance	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
S 442	Scott P. Brown	relative to vacancies in the office of U.S. Senator	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
S 443	Scott P. Brown	relative to independent expenditures	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
S 444	Scott P. Brown	providing for the proper furnishing of ballots in the Commonwealth	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
S 445	Robert S. Creedon	entering into agreement to elect president by national popular vote	09/19/07	OTP 10/5/07
S 446	Cynthia Stone Creem	relative to election day registration	05/30/07	OTP 2/21/08
S 447	Cynthia Stone Creem	require voting systems to be accessible to people with disabilities	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
S 448	Cynthia Stone Creem	relating to polling locations	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
S 449	Cynthia Stone Creem	relative to the effective date of city and ward voting precincts	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
S 450	Michael R. Knapik	relative to voter registration in public high schools	06/13/07	OTP 2/6/08
S 451	Joan M. Menard	regulating campaign contributions	07/18/07	OTP 2/6/08
S 452	Joan M. Menard	relative to agreement to elect the president by national popular vote	09/19/07	OTP 10/5/07
S 453	Richard T. Moore	independent redistricting commission for Congressional districts	04/11/07	ONTP 4/25/07
S 454	Michael W. Morrissey	relative to street lists	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
S 455	Therese Murray	relative to the street list	10/22/07	OTP 10/22/07
S 456	Robert O'Leary	regulating elections to provide voters "none of the above" option	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08

BILL #	SPONSOR	TITLE or DESCRIPTION	HEARING DATE	REPORT
S 457	Pamela P. Resor	authorizing cities, towns and districts to send information to voters	07/18/07	OTP 10/22/07
S 458	Stanley C. Rosenberg	expanding financial reporting requirements, information on ballot	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
S 459	Bruce E. Tarr	authorize Manchester-by-the-Sea to recall elected local officials	02/06/08	Study 3/19/08
S 460	Bruce E. Tarr	remove incumbent advantage from ballot, change "unenrolled"	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
S 461	Richard R. Tisei	independent campaign expenditures and electioneering comm.	10/10/07	Study 3/19/08
S 462	Richard R. Tisei	relative to campaign reporting	07/18/07	Study 3/19/08
S 463	Richard R. Tisei	relative to voting list access	10/22/07	Study 3/19/08
S 464	Richard R. Tisei	relative to voter identification	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
S 465	Richard R. Tisei	relative to the voting procedures of presidential electors	09/19/07	Study 3/19/08
S2243	Cynthia Stone Creem	relative to voter registration / schools	06/13/07	Study 3/19/08
S2283	Stanley C. Rosenberg	local voting rights for permanent resident aliens in Amherst	02/06/08	Study 3/19/08
S2290	Scott P. Brown	provide for recall elections in the town of Wrentham	POLL	OTP 1/4/08
S2304	Michael Morrissey	relative to recall elections in the town of Holbrook	08/15/07	OTP 8/15/07
S2323	Steven Panagiotakos	relative to elections in the City of Lowell (prelim. city council ele)	POLL	OTP 8/23/07
S2362	Edward M. Augustus	relative to bilingual ballots in municipal elections in Worcester	10/22/07	OTP 10/22/07
S2414	Redraft of S.439	relative to administration of elections to be held in the year 2008	POLL	OTP 11/14/07
S2789	Susan C. Fargo	authorize Concord to send information to voters	07/24/08	OTP 07/24/08
S2871	Benjamin Downing	relative to recall elections in the town of Middlefield	POLL	OTP 9/17/08

Summary of Committee Legislation Enacted Into Law During 2007-2008 Session

Chapter of Acts / Year	Bill #	Title, Sponsor, Description
Chapter 18 of 2007	H.3747	An Act Validating Actions Taken at a Certain Election Held in the Town of Wareham Filed by Governor Patrick at request of Rep. Gifford and Sen. Pacheco. This special act validates the April 3, 2007 annual town election to fill a vacancy in the office of Selectman. Absent this special legislation, the town would have had to hold a special election at a cost of \$15,000.
Chapter 52 of 2007	H.4042	An Act Authorizing the Town of Sudbury to Extend the Election Date for Approving a Debt Exclusion Vote Filed by Rep. Conroy after Town Meeting vote. This special act authorized the town of Sudbury to be exempted from a state law requiring debt exclusion votes to be placed on a ballot no later than September 15 following adoption at a town meeting. This enabled the town to include the debt exclusion question on the same ballot as a special Congressional election scheduled for October 16, 2007.
Chapter 53 of 2007	H.3973	An Act Regulating Preliminary Elections in the City of Woburn Filed by Rep. Kaufman following a vote of the council and mayor. This special act amends Chapter 139 of the Acts of 1946 by changing the schedule for holding preliminary elections from 4 weeks prior to every regular or special city election, to 6 weeks prior to such elections.
Chapter 60 of 2007	H.4040	An Act Relative to the Use of a Certain Voting Equipment System in the City of Haverhill Filed by Rep. Dempsey after approval of city council and mayor. This special act exempted the city from a state law requiring changes in voting machines to take place 120 days prior to an election, to facilitate the use of voting equipment at an upcoming special election.
Chapter 99 of 2007	H.4149	An Act Validating the Actions Taken at the Annual Town Election Held in the Town of Southamptton Filed by Governor Patrick at the request of Rep. Kocot and Sen. Knapik. This special act validated the results of a May 7, 2007 annual election notwithstanding the failure of the town to post a warrant.
Chapter 107 of 2007	S.2323	An Act Relative to Elections in the City of Lowell in 2007 Filed by Sen. Panagiotakos after approval of city council and manager. This special legislation allowed the city to forego holding a preliminary municipal election in order to save taxpayer money. There were 21 candidates for 18 positions.
Chapter 141 of 2007	S.2304	An Act Relative to Recall Elections in the Town of Holbrook Filed by Sen. Morrissey following approval of town meeting. Special act establishing a process for holding recall elections. Similar to other home rule petitions, this act prohibits a recalled official from being appointed to any town office for 12 months following their removal.

Chapter 125 of 2007	H.4071	<p>An Act Providing for the Election of City Councilors and School Committee Persons Within the City of Springfield</p> <p>Filed by Rep. Swan after approval of city council and mayor. This special act authorized the city to change from having the city council and school committee elected at-large, to having a format where some members are elected from individual districts. This act addresses an issue of non-representation on the city council and school committee which had been the subject of a lawsuit. A voter referendum on the proposed legislation was approved on November 6, 2007 by 74 percent. These changes will take effect at the next municipal election.</p>
Chapter 129 of 2007	H.3947	<p>An Act Relative to Elections in the Town of Merrimac</p> <p>Filed by Rep. Harriett Stanley after town meeting approval. This special act authorized a recall election process in the town, to be initiated by an affidavit of at least 400 registered voters. A recall petition must then be signed by at least 20 percent of registered voters and be certified by the town clerk. If the official whose recall is being sought does not resign within 5 days after notification, a recall election must be held between 64 and 90 days later.</p>
Chapter 179 of 2007	S.2414	<p>An Act Relative to the Administration of Elections to be Held in the Year 2008</p> <p>Original bill, S.439, was filed by former Sen. Barrios; Committee redraft prepared by Secretary of State Galvin. This law changed the date of the Presidential Primary Election in 2008 from Tuesday, March 4 to Tuesday, February 5, 2008. It also authorized the Secretary of State to adjust any affected deadlines and take other related actions necessary to carry out the intent of the law.</p>
Chapter 216 of 2007	H.3946	<p>An Act Prohibiting Certain Multiple Office Holdings in the Town of Burlington</p> <p>Filed by Rep. Charles Murphy following town meeting approval. This special act provides that municipal elected officials in the town of Burlington may only hold one elected office at a time. If an official is elected to a second position, the first one is vacated. The act includes a provision for voter referendum asking whether it shall be accepted.</p>
Chapter 74 of 2008	S.2290	<p>An Act Providing for Recall Elections in the Town of Wrentham</p> <p>Filed by Sen. Scott Brown after town meeting approval. This special act establishes a procedure for recalling an elected official upon the filing of an affidavit by 5 percent of the registered voters. The recall petition would have to be signed by at least 20 percent of voters in the town, as certified by the town clerk. As provided for in similar laws, the person who is the subject of a recall petition would be notified and have the option of resigning within 5 days. Otherwise, they could stand as a candidate in a recall election held between 64 and 90 days after the petition had been certified. If the official is not recalled, no new petition against the person could be filed for another 6 months after the election.</p>

Chapter 98 of 2008	H.4500	<p>An Act Placing a Certain Question on the Ballot of the November 2008 State Election in the Town of Palmer</p> <p>Filed by Rep. Smola following a vote of the town meeting.</p> <p>This special act, redrafted with a new bill number of H.4558, authorized the town of Palmer to place a question on the state ballot concerning the possible election of a charter commission. The act also describes the deadlines and procedure for printing the names and addresses of candidates for the charter commission.</p>
Chapter 99 of 2008	S.2362	<p>An Act Authorizing Bilingual Ballots in Municipal Elections in the City of Worcester</p> <p>Filed by Sen. Augustus upon local approval (council-city manager).</p> <p>This special act authorizes the city of Worcester to conduct municipal elections in both English and Spanish, and ratifies the use of such ballots in elections that were held in 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2007.</p>
Chapter 152 of 2008	H.4397	<p>An Act Relative to Preliminary Elections in the City of Newton</p> <p>Filed by Rep. Balser following local approval by the board of aldermen and mayor.</p> <p>This special act amends the Newton charter by changing the date on which preliminary elections must be held, from 4 weeks before the election, to a date determined by the board of aldermen. Elections would still be held on a Tuesday.</p>
Chapter 155 of 2008	H.4097	<p>An Act Relative to Elections in the City of Everett</p> <p>Filed by Rep. Smith following local approval by council and mayor.</p> <p>This special act, similar to one enacted for Burlington, amends an 1892 special act for the city of Everett, by providing that a person may run for only one elected position on the ballot in any one election.</p>
Chapter 161 of 2008	H.4560	<p>An Act Establishing a Voting Precinct in the Town of Hingham</p> <p>This legislation was redrafted and became H.4591, and was filed by Governor Patrick at the request of Rep. Bradley, Sen. Hedlund and the town of Hingham. This special act authorized the town of Hingham to divide Precinct 6 into two voting precincts: Precinct 6 and Precinct 6A, in order to establish a polling place at the Linden Ponds retirement community. The new precinct serves both the residents of Linden Ponds and residents living on 19 nearby streets in the neighborhood.</p>
Chapter 183 of 2008	H.4737	<p>An Act Authorizing the Town of Reading to Place a Question on the Ballot Relative to the Granting of Licenses for the Sale of All Alcoholic Beverages to Certain Restaurants</p> <p>Filed by Rep. Jones following town meeting approval.</p> <p>This special act authorizes the town to place on the 2009 municipal election ballot a question asking voters to reverse a 1982 vote which limited eligibility for all-alcohol licenses to restaurants having more than 100 seats. The act does not increase the number of licenses.</p>

Chapter 203 of 2008	H.4865	An Act Providing for the Election of School Committee Members in the Southern Berkshire Regional School District Filed by Rep. Pignatelli. This is considered general legislation. This act authorizes the Secretary of State to place the names of candidates for the Southern Berkshire Regional School District on the November 4, 2008 State Election ballot in the towns of Alford, Egremont, Monterey, New Marlborough and Sheffield. Members of the school committee would be elected district-wide every 2 years. The act contains provisions for nominations, signature requirements, and other procedures and deadlines related to the election process.
Chapter 235 of 2008	H.4884	An Act Authorizing the State Secretary to Place the Office of Selectmen on the State Election Ballot in the Town of Topsfield Filed by Governor Patrick by request of Rep. T. Speliotis and Sen. Berry on behalf of the town. This special act authorized the Secretary of State to place on the November 4, 2008 State Election ballot the office of selectmen to allow the town to fill a vacancy on the board. The act contains provisions regarding nominations, along with related procedures and deadlines.
Chapter 326 of 2008	H.4983	An Act Relative to Polling Places in the City of Boston Filed by Rep. Sanchez; local approval by the city council and mayor. This special act authorizes the city of Boston to designate a polling place in an adjacent precinct, if the location is properly equipped and in a public and convenient locale. If accessibility remains an issue, the city has the option of designating a voting place in a non-adjacent precinct.
Chapter 344 of 2008	H.4250	An Act Validating the Actions Taken at the Annual Town Election held in the Town of Lanesborough Filed by Governor Patrick by request of Rep. Guyer and Sen. Downing. This special act ratifies, validates and confirms the results of the May 15, 2007 annual town election, notwithstanding the failure of the town to properly post the warrant within the required time period, at least 7 days before the date of the election.
Chapter 346 of 2008	H.4757	An Act Authorizing the Town of Belmont to Place a Certain Question Relative to the Granting of a Club License for the Sale of All-Alcoholic Beverages in the Town of Belmont Filed by Rep. Brownsberger with approval of town meeting. This special act authorized the town to place a question on the ballot of the next regular or special town election asking whether the town should grant an “all-alcoholic” club beverage license to the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1272. A fair and concise summary would accompany the ballot question. Beverages would be limited to members and guests.
Chapter 353 of 2008	H.4545	An Act Validating a Certain Election in the Town of Medway Filed by Governor Patrick by request of Rep. Vallee and Sen. Spilka. This special act ratifies, validates and confirms the results of the May 5, 2008 annual town election notwithstanding the failure of town officials to post the warrant at least 7 days in advance of the election.

Chapter 369 of 2008	H.688	<p>An Act Temporarily Extending the Grace Period for Voter Residency</p> <p>Legislation requested by Secretary of State William Galvin. Filed as a substitute for original bill language, this law was in effect only for the November 4, 2008 State and Presidential Election. It allowed qualified voters who had removed from their previous address more than 6, but less than 18 months prior to the election, to vote at their previous address notwithstanding current state law. The intent of the legislation was to ensure that persons displaced through bankruptcy, foreclosure or other circumstances did not lose their ability to vote for President, Vice-President, U.S. Senator, or the statewide ballot questions.</p>
Chapter 378 of 2008	H.4932	<p>An Act Validating the Action Taken at the Special Town Election Held in the Town of Oak Bluffs</p> <p>Filed by Governor Patrick at request of the town, Rep. Turkington, and Sen. O’Leary.</p> <p>This special act ratifies, confirms and validates the town’s May 28, 2008 Special Town Election notwithstanding the failure to post the warrant at one of two public locations (Post Office) as required by law. The special election included three Prop. 2 ½ override questions. Voters approved 2 of the overrides, and rejected a third.</p>
Chapter 383 of 2008	H.3971	<p>An Act Validating the Actions Taken at an Annual Town Election in the Town of Dudley</p> <p>Filed by Governor Patrick at the request of the town, Rep. Kujawski and Senator Moore.</p> <p>Ratifies, validates and confirms the results of the May 7, 2007 annual town election. The town clerk did not receive notification of the need to fill two vacancies on the Planning Board until after the deadline specified by state law.</p>
Chapter 402 of 2008	H.5134	<p>An Act Relative to the Voting Practices of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments</p> <p>Filed by Rep. Kulik and Sen. Downing, this general legislation amends the 1998 law which established the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, by lowering the number of signatures required to run for elected positions in that body from 500 to 150. Lowering the signature requirement will help candidates obtain nomination signatures from registered voters living in the mostly rural and sparsely populated area.</p>
Chapter 480 of 2008	H.5152	<p>An Act Validating the Actions Taken at Annual Town Elections Held in the Town of Dalton</p> <p>Filed by the Governor following a request by the town, Representative Guyer and Sen. Downing, this legislation validates, ratifies and confirms the votes of the town taken at elections held in 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008, in which the town failed to include the form of ballot questions in the warrant.</p>
Chapter 483 of 2008	H.4458	<p>An Act Relative to Elections in the Town of Braintree</p> <p>Filed by Rep. Driscoll, this special act adds language to the town charter to require that candidates for the office of electric light board, library trustee or housing authority obtain at least 50 signatures town wide.</p>

Chapter 484 of 2008	H.4459	An Act Providing for the Filling of Certain Vacancies in the Town of Braintree Filed by Rep. Driscoll, Sen. Joyce and Sen. Morrissey on behalf of the town, this special legislation amends the town charter by establishing a procedure for filling vacancies in the offices of electric light board, library trustee and housing authority. Under certain circumstances, if a vacancy occurred in these offices, the person who placed second in the previous election could assume the office to serve until either the next election or the balance of the term of office.
Chapter 485 of 2008	H.4489	An Act Relative to Vacancies in Certain Elected Offices in the Town of Braintree This special act, filed by Rep. Driscoll following a 2007 Town Meeting vote, amends the town charter in order to add an appropriate reference to new language being inserted by a related piece of legislation (see Ch.484, above).
Chapter 492 of 2008	H.4889	An Act Relative to Increasing the Number of Signatures on Nomination Petitions for Councillor-at-Large in the City of Boston Filed by Rep. Rush with the approval of the Mayor and City Council, this special act amends previous special acts by increasing the number of signatures required of candidates for councillor-at-large, from 500 to 1,500. The act also deleted language which limited the number of signatures that a candidate for district councillor was required to obtain. That number would be set by city ordinance.

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